

[10 August, 2000]

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early date, and, raise the bilateral Security Dialogue to the level of Additional Secretary. There was also agreement on expediting clarification of the LAC through more frequent meetings of the India-China Expert Group of Diplomatic and Military Officials.

Our relations with China are improving. The two sides have agreed to develop friendly, co-operative, good-neighbourly and mutually beneficial relations based on Panchsheel.

Violation by Pakistani fishing boats in Indian territorial waters

2081. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times Pakistani fishing boats and others violated Indian territorial waters limits during 1999 and the current year so far;

(b) what are the areas which are frequently violated; and

(c) the steps taken to meet the challenge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) According to available information, no incident of violation of Indian territorial waters (from baseline to 12 nautical miles) by Pakistani fishing boats has occurred. However, 25 Pakistani fishing boats have been apprehended from January 1999 till date for entering the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (from baseline upto 200 nautical miles).

(b) The Indian Exclusive Economic Zone off the Gujarat Coast is the area usually violated by Pakistani fishermen.

(c) The Navy and the Coast Guard ships/aircraft conducts regular surveillance to protect our Maritime Zones and safeguard national interest in our Exclusive Economic Zone. Extensive surveillance by Coast Guard ships and aircraft is also undertaken in the sensitive areas.